



**United States Department of Justice  
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# **News Release**

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## **5 indicted following bust of Minneapolis drug trafficking operation**

Officials believe they placed a significant dent in a Minneapolis drug trafficking organization following today's arrest of the fifth individual involved in the operation. The five defendants were indicted Jan. 8 in federal court with one count of conspiracy to distribute heroin and cocaine.

The defendants are: Christian Hernandez-Seldana, 32, Fridley; Ramiro Cuevas-Martinez, 35, Brooklyn Park; Eddy Medina-Garza, 22, Brooklyn Park; Feliz Murguia-Garcia, 35, Brooklyn Park; and Phat Minh Nguyen, 34, St. Paul. Their indictment alleges that between May 1, 2007 and Dec. 20, 2007, the five knowingly and intentionally conspired with each other and others to distribute and possess with intent to distribute 1 kilogram or more of a substance containing a detectable amount of heroin and a substance containing a detectable amount of cocaine.

According to an affidavit filed by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the defendants were part of an operation responsible for distributing heroin and cocaine throughout the greater Minneapolis area. Heroin is a highly addictive and dangerous opiate manufactured from morphine, which is extracted from poppy plants. Cocaine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that directly affects the brain.

Investigators learned that customers would telephone in orders to Hernandez-Seldana and arrange to meet to purchase the drugs. Hernandez-Seldana would generally direct the customer to a set of cross streets in south Minneapolis and give a time frame to meet.

On July 16, 2007, the Minneapolis Police Department's Narcotics Unit executed a search warrant at a Richfield residence, and seized several ounces of heroin, \$40,000 and more than 1 ounce of cocaine. During the search, officers observed Hernandez-Seldana and another man driving by watching the residence.

On several dates between Oct. 26, 2007 and Dec. 17, 2007, law enforcement arranged controlled buys of heroin and cocaine from the organization. The heroin amounts ranged from

1.2 grams to 6.5 grams, and the cocaine amounts ranged from 1 gram to 1.6 grams. According to the affidavit, the drugs were sold at various times from Hernandez-Seldana, Cuevas-Martinez, Medina-Garza and Murguia-Garcia.

On Dec. 20, 2007, agents executed a search warrant at Hernandez-Seldana's Fridley residence, and recovered approximately 400 grams of heroin, 81 grams of cocaine and cash.

If convicted, each of the five defendants face a potential maximum penalty of life in prison and a \$4 million fine. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA and the Minneapolis Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Steven L. Schleicher.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by the defendant. The defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.